3: Skrine G-3 (1922-1924) 1926 All Sinkiang All

before the owner of the house they bow with a sweeping movement of the arms and a stroking of the beard intoning a sonorous "*Amīn*" the while, after which each person is entitled to a sup of sacrificial mutton. On the first of the two days of Qurban only men perform the salaam; the second is the women's day, when separate tables are spread in the *andarūn* for the fair visitors. The skin of each sheep sacrificed goes to the Imam, the head and feet to the Mu'azzin, the neck and offal to the butcher and a portion of the meat to the beggars.

Turning to superstitions, the field for research is so wide that it was scarcely possible for me to do more than reconnoitre it in the time at my disposal. Witchcraft in particular flourishes exceedingly. I had it on good authority that at Yarkand in 1924 there were between 25 and 30 witch-doctors, who made large profits, chiefly out of the women. These gentry are called *bakhshis* at Yarkand, *du'a-khwans* or *jadugars* at Kashgar. At a meeting of the "real" doctors of Yarkand in 1923—the local General Medical Council, as it were—it was estimated that the *bakhshis* made between them 175,000 local taels or about £2,300 in the year, as against a beggarly £400 made by the poor doctors. The latter have only themselves to thank for this state of affairs, for they are hopelessly inefficient and their methods date back to the days of Hippocrates and Galen.[1] Skilful advertisement, however, contributes to the magicians' popularity; in every tea-house, every meeting-place of the people there are agents paid by them to tell stories of wonderful cures effected by such and such a *bakhshi*. The fees paid to the witch-doctors vary from one *tenga* (*2d.*) to 20 taels (£2 13*s.* 4*d.*) or more. In return for these they compose spells and perform incantations to drive away the demons which possess the patient. I heard them doing it once, and I shall never forget it. One night, as I was sleeping in my verandah as usual, I was awakened at 3 a.m. by loud music and drum-beating from a neighbouring house. The playing was loud and rhythmic and the melody haunting; but there was something sinister about the music, as if it had no soul. One phrase would be repeated again and again, then another would be substituted for it. I was puzzled by the performance; it sounded like some strange Bacchanal,

[1] For a description of the methods of Kashgar doctors, see Grenard, "La Haute Asie," Vol. II, pp. 110–12; Sykes, "Through Deserts and Oases of Central Asia," pp. 317–20.

3: Skrine G-3 (1922-1924) 1926 All Sinkiang All

but what house would be making merry in the small hours that had been silent at midnight? After a time, sleep being impossible, I went round to the quarter-guard and sent the orderly on duty to try and stop it. While he was yet on his way the music ceased suddenly of its own accord, in the middle of a phrase, and all was silence. At breakfast the orderly came and reported that the *du'a-khwans* had been making magic music to drive away the evil spirits from our neighbour, an old Haji, who was very sick. He had died that morning, I was told, at a quarter to four.[1]

Witch-doctoring is by no means the only form of magic practised. There is *jarrakashi* or the casting of the evil eye; there are the spells which induce love, and those which sow enmity between people—these are bought by third parties, who expect to profit thereby; there are the *chumkashchis* or private detectives with magical powers. The belief in the evil eye is very strong, especially among the fair sex. If a woman feels liverish, she at once concludes that she has been bewitched, and goes to the *du'a-khwan*. Even D.'s excellent maid, Aisha Khan, who had been much with Europeans and was distinctly intelligent, was by no means free from this weakness. Once when she had been feeling seedy for some days she came to D. and informed her rather sheepishly—ashamed to admit belief, but evidently believing—that her friends all said it was her husband's other wife who was casting the evil eye upon her. The trouble, she explained, was that the other lady's brother was a professional *du'a-khwan*, which

[1] Grenard, "La Haute Asie," pp. 254–7, describes the procedure on such occasions. The patient is taken out of bed and seated on the ground with his back up against a rope stretched tightly from the middle of the ceiling to the floor. While his assistants play on their tambourines and sing continuously, the sorcerer dances round the patient and brushes the latter's face with the body of a cock. Sometimes he takes out the cock's lungs and whips the sufferer on the back with them, or with a willow wand, crying the while "Qach! Qach!" (Avaunt!) Invocations begin with the Prophet, but go on with Chingiz Khan and other ancient heroes. A fire is lighted, and a tambourine is placed in the smoke and then brought close to the patient's ear. All this, says Grenard, appertains to ancestor-worship and Shamanism. The wand, the tambourine, the lungs of sacrificed animals, are all part of the stock-in-trade of the "shamans" or sorcerers of pagan tribes in Siberia. Most curious of all, the rope tied from ceiling to floor represents the tree-trunk, marked with the signs of the Zodiac and other mystical characters, which is placed upright in the middle of the tent after the completion of a "purification."

/The New Uighurs/

563 576 mutual courtesy. In addressing one another they use the polite form of you. The same politeness is demonstrated between wife and husband. Parents use the equivalent of "thou" to address their children, servants or workers. Upon meeting a friend or entering a friend's house they say "As-salam Alaikum," and the reply is "Alaikum as-salam." They inquire about the health of the family, then bow and shake hands. Only women kiss when they meet, and only if they are related. When they part they say "Khosh," or "Allah Akbar," meaning, "The Lord is great."

563 576 574 264 [782] The more religious women pray before eating or starting to do something. Washing the hands before and after meals is mandatory. Bowls of water and towels are provided at a feast or banquet table, and hands are washed between courses. When a hostess serves refreshments to a guest, the guest rises, bows and says "Ishqallah," meaning thank you. Polite speeches are made by both host and guest on the guest's arrival and departure. Good manners are regarded as important.

4. Superstitions and taboos

563 771 [796] [798] [769] The New Uighurs attach superstition to almost everything. They believe in witches, ghosts, charms and talismans. As mentioned before, they believe in the powers of local saints and heroes, to whom they have dedicated innumerable shrines, and certain superstitions connect these shrines with the curing of disease and the bearing of children. Ancestor worship is also strong among them, as shown by the popular names of the shrines.

[756] [755] [789] 563 771 795 [782] [825] The people are also firm believers in witch-doctors, and in magic powers that cure disease, induce love, or sow enmity between people. Ghosts are much feared, especially the ghost of a Chinese. People regard the Urumchi Road from Kashgar as a haunt for Chinese ghosts. They believe that if one is haunted he may be able to propitiate the ghosts by leaving money on his doorstep overnight. If the money is gone in the morning, the ghosts have taken it and will make no further trouble. They also have a superstitious dread of snakes, and believe that if one kills a snake, its mate will haunt him.

563 372 [777] 563 821 The New Uighurs try to maintain an everlasting fire in their fireplaces, to bring prosperity to the house. Ashes from the fireplace are carried out at night or before sunrise, for to clean the fireplace and take out the ashes during the day may bring misfortune to the household. They fear thunder, and during a thunderstorm they pray for deliverance from threatening danger.

5. Religious celebrations and festivals

563 796 Like the festivals of Moslems the world over, the festivals of the New Uighurs are deeply colored with religious influence. Besides Fridays, which are generally celebrated, the people have only three main holidays, Rōse-häyt, Kurban-häyt and